



Congresswoman Shelley Berkley's

Guide for Nevada Veterans and Gold Star Families

VA Benefits

ACCESSIBILITY TO A CASUALTY ASSISTANCE OFFICER

Immediately following your service member's death, a casualty assistance officer will meet with you and help plan a service befitting your loved one's memory, which includes the burial location, transportation to the service, and the opportunity to see the loved one.

DEATH GRATUITY

A service member may designate up to two beneficiaries to receive a \$100,000 lump sum payment from the Department of Defense upon their death if they are currently serving or within 120 days of serving, if their death was a service-related injury.

https://www.gibill2.va.gov/cgi-bin/vba.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1059&p_created=1256727661&p_topview=1

BURIAL BENEFITS

Available benefits include a gravesite in a national cemetery with available space, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. The VA does not make funeral or other burial arrangements, but survivors may be entitled to a burial allowance.

<http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/bbene/bbene.asp>

DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION (DIC)

This tax-free benefit applies to surviving spouses and dependent children. Compensation from the VA in 2010 was a flat rate of \$1,154 per month plus additional money depending on the number of surviving children.

Note, a spouse's Survivor Benefits Plan annuity is reduced by any DIC received. Apply here:

<http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors/21-534a.pdf>

G.I. Bill

Many veterans and active duty personnel qualify for more than one education benefits program, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Reserve Educational Assistance Program, and the Post Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program. Depending on your circumstances, you may be eligible for these benefits. Find out more about which VA education benefits and apply here: <http://www.gibill.va.gov>

SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE (DEA)

Assistance is available for spouses to pursue college degrees. This benefit, which is also available to surviving

children, includes payment of a monthly education or training allowance for up to 45 months. Spouses remain eligible for this benefit for up to 20 years after a Service Member's death. Apply here: <http://gibill.va.gov/post-911/other-programs/dea.html>

LIFE INSURANCE

Low-cost group life insurance is available for service members with pay-outs in increments of \$50,000 until the maximum amount of \$400,000 is met.

http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book/benefits_chap06.asp

INCOME TAX FORGIVENESS

Income tax liability may be forgiven for a service member who dies due to service in a combat zone or due to military or terrorist actions. The liability is forgiven for the entire year in which death occurred.

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p559/ar02.html>

HOME LOANS

Surviving spouses who have not remarried may be eligible for a guaranteed loan from a private lender to purchase or improve a home or refinance an existing mortgage.

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/dependents/SpouseIgy.htm> Apply: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-26-1817-ARE.pdf>

BEREAVEMENT COUNSELING

The VA offers counseling service to parents, spouses, and children of armed forces personnel who died in service of their country.

http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Bereavement_Counseling.asp

GOVERNMENT HOUSING

Families in government housing may stay for up to one year from the date of a service member's death. If the family wishes to remain in government housing for more than a year, they must make a written request to the base commander.

GOLD STAR LAPEL BUTTON AND PIN

Family of service members who lost their lives while in active military service may be eligible for a lapel button and pin. Usually, the lapel button is given when a service member dies in combat.

Additional Information on Gold Star Benefits from the VA: <http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors/vabenefits.htm>

VA Benefit Agencies: <http://www.vba.va.gov/survivors/agencies.htm>

Social Security Administration's Guide to Survivor Benefits: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/survivorplan/index.htm>

State Benefit Resources

HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE:

The State of Nevada Wildlife Division will issue free hunting fishing licenses to any honorably separated veteran who has a service-connected disability of 50% or more. For more information, contact the Nevada Wildlife Division at 775 688-1500 in Reno, (702) 486-5127 in Las Vegas, and (775) 738-5332 in Elko.

VETERANS TAX EXEMPTION:

An annual tax exemption is available to any veteran with wartime service (including in-theater service during the Persian Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq Wars). To obtain this exemption, take a copy of your DD214 or discharge papers to your local County Assessor. The exemption can be applied to a veteran's vehicle privilege tax or real property tax. The exemption cannot be split between the two. To obtain the exact amount of this benefit, contact your County Assessor. Veterans may also "donate" their exempted tax directly to the Nevada Veterans' Home Account, which will contribute the amount toward the operation of a Veterans' Home in Nevada.

DISABLED VETERAN TAX EXEMPTION:

Nevada offers a property tax exemption to any veteran with a service-connected disability of 60% or more. The exemption that is or will be available to disabled veterans varies from \$6,250 to \$20,000 of assessed valuation, depending on the percentage of disability and the year filed. To qualify, the veteran must have an honorable separation from the service and be a resident of Nevada. The widow or widower of a disabled veteran, who was eligible for this exemption at the time of his or her death, may also be eligible to receive this exemption. This exemption can be applied to a veteran's vehicle tax or personal property tax. To determine the actual value of this benefit or to obtain further information, contact your local county assessor's office.

NEVADA VETERANS HOME:

The State-owned and operated veterans' home is located in Boulder City. The home consists of an extended care facility for veterans in need of skilled nursing home care. Future plans call for a Veterans Home in Northern Nevada. For admission information, see the Veterans Home webpage (http://www.veterans.nv.gov/veterans_home.html) or call (702) 332-6864.

VETERAN CEMETERY PLOTS:

Eligible veterans and members of their immediate family may be buried at the Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Fernley, or at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City. There is no charge for the plot, vault, and opening and closing of a gravesite for a veteran. A \$350 fee (subject to change) is charged for the burial of the spouse or dependent of a veteran. For more information, you may refer to the cemetery's webpage (<http://www.veterans.nv.gov/cedeteries.html>) or call: (775) 575-4441 (northern NV) or (702) 486-5920 (southern NV).

DISABLED PARKING PRIVILEGES:

The State of Nevada authorizes special parking permits for physically disabled persons. Applications are

available at your local DMV office or can be obtained by contacting the DMV Special Plate Section at (775) 684-4750 in Carson City or on the DMV website: <http://www.dmvnv.com/platesdisabled.htm>.

SPECIAL VETERANS LICENSE PLATES:

The Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles offers several distinctive license plates for veterans that include:

- Ex-Prisoner of War
- Disabled Veteran
- Purple Heart
- Veteran
- Pearl Harbor Survivors & Veterans
- Congressional Medal of Honor

Applications for special plates can be obtained at your local DMV Office by calling (775) 684-4750 in Carson City, or by visiting the Nevada DMV website at <http://www.dmvnv.com/platesveterans.htm>.

GOLD STAR FAMILY LICENSE PLATES

This is a Specialty License Plate issued by the Nevada DMV to immediate family members of those killed in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. License The initial cost of the plate is \$1 and the plate renewal is free of charge. Apply: <http://www.dmvnv.com/pdfforms/sp76.pdf>

DOCUMENTS:

Veterans or their dependents filing claims for service-connected disabilities may receive a one-time free copy of their birth, divorce, death, or marriage certificate from the appropriate county courthouse.

RECORDING FEES:

Discharge certificates are recorded free of charge to eligible veterans by Nevada Count Recorders.

CIVIL SERVICE PREFERENCE:

Civil service preference is given to veterans applying for state employment in Nevada. Veterans with service-connected disabilities receive additional preference. For information, contact the Nevada Department of Personnel at (775) 684-0150 in Carson City or (702) 486-2900 in Las Vegas.

Other financial, medical, and educational assistance may be available to you. Contact your local Veterans' Service Office or Nevada's Department of Veterans' Services at (775) 688-1653 or (866) 630-8387 for more information.



Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need assistance:

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